

Coins

'Sale of century' set

By Roger Boye

AFTER THE Civil War, many Americans headed west to search for their fortunes. But T. Harrison Garrett decided to stay put in Baltimore and use his savings to buy old coins.

He snatched up so many rare pieces that, by the time of his death in 1888, experts said the Garrett collection was one of the finest ever assembled. It included many exceedingly rare proof gold coins and colonial pieces.

Eventually, John Hopkins University in Baltimore acquired the huge hoard of numismatic treasures. But university trustees decided recently that they could no longer afford to insure the great collection put together by Garrett and his heirs.

Consequently, the trustees have hired Bowers & Ruddy Galleries Inc., a rare-coin company, to sell the more than 2,000 coins at public auction. Firm president Q. David Bowers is calling the planned four-part auction "the coin sale of the century," and he isn't exaggerating.

The first auction, on Nov. 28 and 29 in New York, will include many coins from the late 1700s, such as four silver pieces dated 1783. They are the only known examples of the first coins authorized by the United States government.

For a catalog of the more than 600 rarities to be sold in November, send

\$10 to Bowers & Ruddy Galleries, Suite 600, 6922 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles, Cal. 90028. The softbound book includes hundreds of illustrations and detailed history and descriptions of all lots.

"JOHN WAYNE, American." That's the simple inscription on a new government medal commemorating the late actor's distinguished career.

The U.S. Mint is making one medal in gold for presentation to Wayne's family, and thousands of bronze specimens for sale to the public. A 3-inch bronze medal costs \$8.30, and the 1 1/2-inch version goes for \$1.10.

To order, send a check or money order to Bureau of the Mint, 55 Mint St., San Francisco, Cal. 94175. Medals should be mailed in the next several weeks.

SEVERAL dealers will sell and buy rare coins from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. today at the annual shows of two area coin clubs.

Some of the dealers will attend the Club of Illinois Numismatists extravaganza at the Holiday Inn-Harvey, near the intersection of Halsted Street and Int. Hwy. 80-294. Others will set up shop at the 17th annual show of the North Shore Coin Club at the Sheraton North Shore Inn, 933 Skokie Blvd., Northbrook.

Admission is free at each show, and door prizes will be awarded.